

From: Brooks, John

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2006 8:28 AM

Subject: Core Review Committee Minutes, March 16, 2006 (Draft)

The Core Review Committee met Thursday, March 16. The meeting was called to order at 3:40 p.m. by Dr. Greg Rich, chair. Dr. Brooks recorded the proceedings. Present: K. Anderson, J. Brooks, E. DeValve, T. Frobish, C. Jewell, D. Okunbor, G. Rich.

The minutes from December 7, 2005 were approved.

The main item of business was to review the reports submitted by the core review task forces. Dr. Rich first asked the Committee to review the charges of the Committee and of the core review task forces.

The charge to the Core Review Committee is to review the University College Core Curriculum, to recommend changes if any, and to report to the University College Advisory Board. The charge to each task force is

- To define its assigned skill/knowledge/value;
- To provide a rationale for why the skill/knowledge/value is essential to liberal education;
- To specify the following proficiency levels:
 - Basic: Prepared for entry-level college work;
 - Proficient: prepared for upper-division work in the major field; and
 - Advanced: prepared for active participation in professional, public, and personal life;
- To consider in crafting definitions and proficiency levels
 - Any standards and proficiencies identified for high school students (as a starting point);
 - Any standards and proficiencies identified by major programs (e.g., Nursing, Business, Education accrediting bodies);
 - Existing practice at FSU (e.g., departmental or program statements, rubrics, etc.);
 - National assessment instruments; and
- To identify assessment measures, both embedded and external, that would demonstrate student proficiency in the outcome.

After reviewing the charges and hearing from task force members on the Committee, it became clear that most of the task forces need more time to fulfill their charge. Dr. Jewell moved **that the Committee direct the task forces to complete their work and submit the results to the Committee no later than May 1, 2006**. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

The Committee discussed issues of formatting. The Committee decided to ask task forces to use the format of the draft critical thinking outcomes statement provided earlier by Dr. Young (available online at http://www.uncfosu.edu/univcoll/curriculum/core/CTcompetencerev_template.pdf). The Committee recommended that proficiency levels be listed in the following order: Basic, Proficient, Advanced. The Committee asked Dr. Brooks to remind task forces that these proficiency levels represent the levels applicable to ALL FSU graduates, not to majors in a specific field. For example, the Advanced proficiency in scientific literacy expected of majors in Chemistry would be considerably higher than that expected of non-majors. The task forces are defining core rather than major student learning outcomes. Reviewing the definitions and rationales, the Committee decided to ask task forces to consider producing definition statements and rationales of one paragraph each. However, the Committee left this as a recommendation rather than a requirement.

The Committee also decided to ask each Task Force to separate out specific curricular recommendations from the student learning outcomes document and compile these recommendations in a separate document.

The Committee then reviewed each of the task force reports and asked Dr. Brooks to record recommendations. The Committee expressed its gratitude at the work of the task forces thus far. Dr.

Brooks indicated that he would send a letter of thanks to all task force participants at the end of the semester.

Communication Skills. Dr. Frobish, a member of the Communication Skills Task Force, reported that the members considered their work almost complete. The task force members want to refine their assessment measures. The Committee recommended that the Communication Skills Task Force continue its work on assessment and write a definition of its outcome.

Reasoning Skills. Dr. Rich reported on behalf of this task force that the work of Reasoning Skills Task Force was well advanced in the area of critical thinking, less far along in quantitative literacy. The Committee noted that Parts I and II of the document seemed to expand upon the beginning of Part III. The Committee asked the Task Force to consider either combining them or placing Parts I and II in an appendix. The Committee also urged that the quantitative reasoning component be developed. Whether quantitative reasoning should be together with critical thinking in one rubric, or separated into two rubrics, would be left to the Task Force.

Inquiry Skills. Dr. Okunbor reported that the Inquiry Skills Task Force considered its work essentially complete. He thought that the assessment measures could be better specified. The Committee asked that the Task Force continue its work on the assessment measures.

Scientific Literacy. Dr. DeValve reported that the Scientific Literacy Task Force requested more guidance from the Committee. Because no member of the Committee was on this Task Force, members were uncertain how to interpret certain aspects of its charge. The Committee provided the following recommendations:

- That goals and objectives be stated in terms of student learning outcomes (e.g., “Students should be able to...”) rather than lists of things students should know. The Committee found that the statement of competencies and rationale on p. 5 of the report was most consistent with the statements of other task forces.
- That proficiency levels, including Advanced, reflect the knowledge and skills all students should have. The Committee considered that some of the competencies in the natural sciences seemed better suited to students majoring in these disciplines.
- That the Task Force attempt to combine, synthesize, and generalize the separate disciplinary competencies to a greater extent. The Committee recommended that there be no more than four rubrics, corresponding to the components of Scientific Literacy enumerated in the Committee’s original definition (Natural World, Social World, Economic Well-Being, Health and Wellness). The Committee noted that more emphasis on scientific method might be one way to accomplish this. The Inquiry Skills Task Force did not include scientific method, leaving this essential component of the core curriculum to the Scientific Literacy Task Force.

Dr. DeValve suggested that one possible synthesis would result in a set of competencies for the sciences (natural and social sciences) and one for living skills (economic well-being plus health and wellness). The Committee leaves the decision of whether to combine rubrics further to the Task Force.

- A corollary of the above recommendation would be to make the proficiencies somewhat less detailed and specific. The natural science rubric should be broad enough to encompass any of the natural sciences likely to be included in the Core.
- Finally, the Committee noted that there was overlap between the Computer Science competencies and the competencies addressed in the Inquiry Skills Task Force. The Committee recommended that information technology be addressed in the Inquiry Skills outcome rather than in the Scientific Literacy area.

Global Literacy. Dr. Brooks reported that the Global Literacy Task Force wished to continue its work to develop the competencies it had identified. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the competencies produced thus far and asked the Task Force to develop a rationale, proficiency levels, and assessment measures.

Ethics/Civic Engagement. Dr. Jewell reported that the Ethics/Civic Engagement Task Force felt that its work was well underway but needed some refinement. The Committee asked the Task Force to consider combining the first and second parts of the report. It also asked the Task Force to consider producing a one-paragraph definition and a one-paragraph rationale, with lengthier justification placed in an appendix.

After making these recommendations, the Committee decided that they would form the basis of the report to the University College Advisory Board. The Committee would seek guidance from the Board for its next steps and wait to call its next meeting until after the Board has met.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John I. Brooks III, Ph.D.
Director of University College
Fayetteville State University
Fayetteville, NC 28301-4298

Office: Helen T. Chick Bldg. 111
Phone: (910) 672-1060
Fax: (910) 672-1846
Email: jibrooks@uncfsu.edu
Web: <http://www.uncfsu.edu/univcoll/>